products to national and international markets with the help of business houses. Panchayati Raj Instituions are being facilitated to enter into Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) with appropriate business partners.

Under the Rural Business Hubs initiative, the Union Government has facilitated signing of about 50 MoUs between private companies (which include Indian as will as multinational companies based in India and abroad), and Panchayati Raj Institutions. These MoUs pertain to different streams of activities including distribution of power by Panchayats, plantation of Jatropha, fruit processing seed production, organics food, dairying, brick making, electricity generation through bio-mass, handicrafts and handloom.

Central funds for panchayat schemes

†2962. SHRI MAHENDRA SAHNI: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) the scheme under which the Central Government directly allocates the funds to Gram Panchayats, annually;

(b) the names of such schemes in Bihar where funds have been allocated; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) to (c) The Central Government does not directly allocate any funds to Gram Panchayats. Funds are, however, allocated to Panchayati Raj Institutions under the Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) and Central Finance Commission grants through the Consolidated Fund of State. Bihar has been allocated an amount of Rs. 1624 crore as grants recommended by the Twelfth Finance Commission for the Panchayati Raj Institutions during the period 2005—2010 out of which an amount of Rs. 324.80 crore has been released during 2005-06. Under the Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY), an amount Rs. 124.67 crore has been released as Central allocation during 2006-07 along with an allocation of 126479 tonnes of foodgrains (Rice).

Task Force's Recommendations on Panchayati Raj

2963. SHRI A. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Task Force on Panchayati Raj set up in the year 2005 has submitted its report;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, whether the above report recommended that Panchayat elections at all the three tiers be not held on party basis;

(c) if so, whether Competent Authority accepts the above recommendations;

(d) is so, the details thereof; and

(e) the details of the steps taken to implement the recommendations of the above report?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) and (b) The Task Force on Jurisprudence set up by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has submitted its report. The report has recommended *inter alia* that panchayat elections at all the three tiers should not be held on a party basis.

(c) to (e) No, Sir. The report is under examination in the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. *Prima facie*, this particular recommendation appears to fall outside the principle terms of reference of the Task Force.

Funds for PRIs in M.P. under Eleventh Finance Commission

†2964. SHRI LAXMINARAYAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that according to recommendations of Eleventh Finance Commission an amount of Rs. 505.47 crore was to be released to Madhya Pradesh for three tier Panchayati Raj Institutions for the year 2000-01 to 2004-05;

(b) if so, the amount released out of the above said amount;

(c) by when the remaining amount would be released; and

(d) the reasons for non-release of entire amount?

THE MINISTER OF PANCHAYATI RAJ (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (c) A sum of Rs. 454.91 crores was released to the Government of Madhya Pradesh upto 31.03.2005 by the Ministry of Finance, subject to the fulfillment of conditionalities attached to the release of grants and taking into account the pace of utilization of grants upto the prescribed

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.